

THE COMMONWEAL

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THE ADVANCE OF COMMUNISM

ONLY what are called the weak, small nations of the world, through their representatives at Geneva, raised their voices to object to the admission of Russia to the League of Nations. Switzerland, Holland and Portugal voted "No." Thirty-eight nations voted "Yes." Seven others abstained from voting, but indicated their opposition. France, through her Foreign Minister, Joseph Barthou, was the principal spokesman for the affirmative side, supported by Great Britain's delegate, and by the delegates of Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Turkey and Canada. Strong efforts had been made by the great powers to prevent even the small amount of opposition actually manifested from appearing at all; but these efforts failed, and the Swiss delegate, Giuseppe Motta, by his remarkable speech, summed up the thoughts of many even among the delegates who voted for Russia's entrance—thoughts full of deep repugnance and of even deeper foreboding. Perhaps what he had to say may be remembered in history as the swan song of western democracy. For it can scarcely be doubted that the admission of Russia to the

League of Nations marks a tremendous advance of Communism. Europe and America may not succumb to its power, but in struggling to overcome its further advance and its possible supremacy, it well may be that anti-democratic forces such as Fascism and Hitlerism may be considered the only practical weapons.

"Opportunism," and "practical politics," and the "real necessities of the world situation," are the explanations given by several of the correspondents at Geneva in explaining the admission of Russia to the League. With the defection of Germany and Japan, the breakdown of the disarmament conference, the failures in Manchuria and the Chaco, and the absence of the United States from membership, the League of Nations lost a great part of the confidence of the world. The bringing in of Russia can do little to restore that confidence, for at present this measure looks far more like an old-fashioned diplomatic effort to combine against a single nation, Germany, than like a sincere attempt to restore the prestige of the League as an international forum. It may be necessary, at present, so to combine

against Hitler as to justify the proceedings at Geneva; but, on the other hand, what may be gained from a short-range policy may eventually be utterly lost. At any rate, that is the fear which the Swiss delegate so strongly expressed, and it is shared even by those who permitted expediency and opportunism to dictate their votes in Russia's favor.

That the force of which Russia is the tremendously powerful embodiment is absolutely antagonistic to the western civilization which is now struggling to preserve itself, was M. Motta's central thought. "In every sphere—religious, moral, social, political and economic—this form of Communism is the most radical negation of our very vital substance," he affirmed. "Most states even prohibit simple Communist propaganda; all consider it a political crime as soon as it seeks to pass from the realm of theory into that of action."

To what the Swiss statesman said on this point, the followers, or supporters, of Russia, outside of Russia, reply that Russia no longer carries its propaganda to other countries, at least not "officially." They point out that in giving the pledges which enabled the League to admit her, Russia formally abandons her former theory that a proletarian world revolution must precede the establishment of international peace. But apparently there is a different view held in Moscow itself. Even while the negotiations were going on at Geneva, an "International Youth Day" was held at Moscow—where no meetings are held, or speeches allowed, except those which the dictatorship approves. And part of the manifesto adopted by the revolutionary youth of the world assembled in Moscow declared that young men throughout the world "must come out into the streets tomorrow to assist strikes and disorders such as those which in Austria, the United States, Poland and Japan are already working like gigantic battering rams, shattering the capitalistic world. . . . The bourgeoisie must not be allowed a minute of peace. Young soldiers and sailors must fraternize with strikers. They must go over with their weapons to the insurgent masses, and if war comes they must turn their bayonets against the capitalists. The Young Communists' International promises fully to support any organization willing to fight in this spirit." Recent events in San Francisco, in the South, and in New England, certainly indicate that militant Communism is proceeding actively with its world mission, in spite of all statements issued "officially" by Russia, or by the sympathizers of Russia, to the effect that Russia has settled down as a respectable member of the family of nations, intent only on maintaining and perpetuating the blessings of peace.

Nor can Communism do otherwise. It must,

as M. Motta points out, seek to strike its roots everywhere, because its very nature compels it to expansion, and to the conversion of the world. "Its ambition is a world revolution. Its nature, its aspirations and its inner urge," says M. Motta truly, "all make for foreign propaganda. For Communism to abandon these aims would be to deny itself, but by pursuing them it becomes our common enemy, because it threatens us all. It would be easy for me to base each of these statements on authoritative texts drawn from official Bolshevik literature, but I shall spare you superfluous quotation. We are faced with undenied and undeniable truths."

What M. Motta said on the matter of Russia's warfare upon religion—he is a Catholic—was equally powerful, but probably it was even more disregarded. The indifference to religion, which has for so long weakened the structure of western society, shows no signs of being changed even by the active persecutions of religion in Russia and Mexico and Germany. Once upon a time, but long ago, western Christendom battled against barbarians beyond its walls; but now the enemy has passed through the gates, and is welcomed within the citadel as an ally, not fought as a foe. At Geneva another door has been opened to the enemy.

WEEK BY WEEK

PASSIONS flared up here and there along the front of the great textile strike, but when all was said and done there had been singularly little violence and no appreciable evidence of subversive tendencies. The Trend of Events Rhode Island fared worst, and yet the "activism" manifested at Woonsocket was mild compared with the labor strife at times before the war. One can read these news items in varied moods. To us it seems they demonstrate anew the overwhelming conservatism of the great majority of American citizens. Outside very narrowly drawn urban circles, desire to change "the system" in any radical way does not exist. The American is, and at best always has been, deeply concerned with social morality. He can be shocked by manifestations of callousness or dishonesty; he is, to a greater extent, perhaps, than the inheritor of any other national culture, sincerely interested in his neighbor's well-being. He desires happiness through righteousness. Since he seldom takes either time or trouble to think studiously, his confidence in institutions is great and optimistic. The experimental method appeals to him; the kind of experiment termed "revolution" does not. That is how we read the mentality expressed in the local press of several representative districts. And if this diagnosis is correct, it

would be permissible to assume that after much ambling and tight squeezing, the country will reach a tolerable settlement of its economic and social difficulties, less by reason of novelty in the conduct of its affairs than because of the reliable disposition of its people and the moderateness of its tradition. Frankly, we do not think that the end of everything is at hand—nor do we surmise, it may be well to add, that the sources of what the future has in store have just been uncovered. Why not put faith in the American moral heritage and then be as sceptical as the law allows about most other matters?

HOW PAINFULLY the human spirit has battled even for essential liberties is no secret to the reader of history. What is more difficult to envisage is the suffering of those who, for conscience's sake, must brave every terror in the service of freedom.

German
Protestantism

Who shall say what are the moods of embattled German Protestant pastors and their congregations, struggling in the grip of a power which is trying to warp Christianity into the cringing image of an ideological slave doing service to a nationalism gone mad? The papers report that thousands in Munich protested government action against the Protestant bishop of Bavaria, and that other thousands in Nuremberg followed suit. But far too little is told us of the veritable catacombs—not of stone, but of silence and sacrifice—into which the best among Lutheran theologians have been driven. We had read a good deal of their literature—the little, economically printed brochures into which men of deeply Christian habits and of resolute personal courage have poured all the earnestness of their warning. And we would say that in our time there is no better tribute to the abiding vigor of the New Testament, even as there is no more lucid advertisement of the tyranny which threatens not one nation alone but the whole of western civilization. That such men may have grace to keep the light in darkness will be the prayer of every Christian, regardless of confessional differences. Practically considered, the cause of orthodox Lutheranism—so long dependent on princes and now driven to act against the State—may well seem to be a forlorn hope.

SELDOM has testimony regarding a major event been more engrossing than that accumulated at the Morro Castle hearings. The inevitable tendency to "dress up" the story was present—rumors of mysterious "radical" arson plots, whispers of dissension, a hint that a bottle of cleaning fluid might have been responsible. But when all these things

had been dragged out of hiding and permitted to tickle sundry imaginations, the prosaic outlines of the tragic story were nevertheless quite clear. A ship built for pleasure trips had an immense superstructure of inflammable materials. Suddenly, in the early hours of the morning, a handful of passengers and stewards noticed the odor of smoke. The blaze—apparently a flare-up of no consequence—was discovered in a corner of the writing-room; and the steward who found it acted sanely and went after a man appointed to fight fires. At first everything "clicked" fairly well. The commanding officer was informed; he issued seemingly appropriate orders. Nevertheless in a couple of minutes irreparable damage was done. Flames spat hither and thither, demonstrating the inadequacy of the precautions taken. Before the captain was aware of what a tragedy was rushing to its dénouement, the worst had happened. A conflagration barred passage from one part of the ship to another; crew and passengers were separated; action from the bridge was impossible; and the hectic disarray of such rescues as were effected became a matter of history. One concludes that the real explanation is one of misplaced confidence in the vessel. Those in control had not realized that such a fire was possible, but death had nevertheless marked scores for its own. Once again man too blindly trusted the dependability of his creation. Minor evidence supporting this contention has been presented in vast quantities. A certain laxity of discipline combined with a manifest awkwardness in emergencies to produce a situation which challenges the future of American marine service.

AFTER the late summer of drought and business doldrums—practically always a depressed and depressing time of the year, as regards the material signs of the struggle for existence—indications multiply that the economic heavens are brightening. Mr.

Henry I. Harriman, Seneschal of the Round Tower of Rugged Individualism, that is, president of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, is for instance quotable to the effect that "in the United States business is better than the psychology of business. Comparing conditions reported on August 1, 1934, with conditions in March, 1933, we find that there were 7,000,000 or 8,000,000 men out of work instead of 12,000,000; that the commodity price level has risen more than 25 percent; that our banking system is sound and liquid and not timid and frozen; that industrial activity has an index number of 76 instead of 59, and that the price level of common stocks has risen from 43 to a July average of 71." Recalling dark days indeed, the Controller of the Currency J. F. T. O'Connor

remembered that "on March 16, 1933, the day following the termination of the general banking holiday, there were in the United States 1,417 national banks with frozen deposits of \$2,207,964,000, which were not allowed to reopen."

"LESS THAN eighteen months later," he continued, "by the close of business September 10, 1934, there were only forty-four unlicensed national banks in this country, and their aggregate frozen deposits totaled but \$51,244,000. The recent figures made public by my office, giving the results of the June 30, 1934, call for conditions of national banks, proved to be reassuring. Total deposits of the 5,442 licensed national banks at the end of June aggregated \$19,932,660,000. This represented an increase of \$2,342,778,000, or 13 percent, over the deposits shown by the 5,159 licensed national banks on December 30, 1933. Total assets of national banks at the close of June amounted to \$23,901,592,000, a gain of \$2,154,109,000, or 9.9 percent, for the six months, and an increase of \$3,041,101,000, or 14.5 percent, for the year." Added to this we have the cheerful headlines in the morning paper: "Rains Revive West, Business Spurts; Farmers begin spending on broad scale as whole picture suddenly changes; Cashing in is under way; Prices of all products soar; Future bright; Subsoil is soaked for next year." That we have an unmatched national plant for the production of real wealth and that the application of a rule of reason and good-will of benefit to the greatest number, coupled with a wise moderation and adaptability, can be applied to the conduct of this plant, we have steadily believed and often frankly stated. Sometimes, no doubt, we have been whistling in the dark, but the nation's deepest dark now seems definitely past.

HONOR comes to the profession of religious, and indeed of American, journalism, with the eightieth birthday of Mr. Thomas F. Meehan, who has been associated in one way or another with practically every venture in scholarly Catholic writing during the past quarter century. He has been the lay member par excellence of the staff of *America* since that magazine was first issued; he has been the guiding editorial genius of the American Catholic Historical Society, to which he has given time and energy without stint, and the impress of his thoughtfulness and care is on "The Catholic Encyclopedia." In addition he has been for us all a source of historical information as well as of inspiration. How Mr. Meehan summoned up, in addition to all this, enough strength to reach the ripe age of eighty without impairing his intellectual keenness is, of course, a mystery he would

doubtless attribute to the salubriousness of the Brooklyn air, which he liked so well as a boy that he has adhered to it unflinchingly ever since. If the explanation merely deepens the mystery for most of us, it serves also to call attention to the numerous other marvels of Mr. Meehan's career—his reticence and humility, attributes of the finest Christian scholarship but rarer than royalty in our times; his amiable interest in all good work afoot, exemplified also in the files of *THE COMMONWEAL*; and the fineness of his critical spirit, which masters detail but never gets lost in it. Mr. Meehan has been made a Knight of St. Gregory by the Holy See. We hope that twenty-five years hence he will begin to be known as "our grand old man."

NOT IMPORTANT perhaps, but rather interesting, is the recent indication that the typical Soviet youth does not care particularly about becoming a movie actor. A government advertisement in a widely read Moscow paper, offering three years' free tuition in film acting, and actual pay besides, drew from upward of 4,000,000 Muscovites only 350 replies. Other developments in Russia of late—the renewed interest in styles, cosmetics and other appurtenances of a gay urban life—had prepared one for something rather different; particularly since a lively dramatic tradition is part of the Russian inheritance, and Russians today are among the most avid of the world's movie-goers. Perhaps the reason why Soviet youth is thus indifferent to the professional call of the screen is the one which, naturally, has been given: that Soviet youth is interested in more serious and communal effort. But other explanations are, we imagine, at least equally true. For instance, it is said that there are no stars in the Soviet film industry. There are no star salaries. There are no movie fan magazines—a strange type of publication whose enormous influence, in our own country, in promoting movie attendance and stimulating movie ambitions the literate reader would scarcely credit. The lack of these artificial but potent excitants would probably operate on the popular mind in any country to dim the glamor of a movie career. Indeed, when we read in one paper that the Soviet will teach its candidates not only acting, but also "the social sciences, the history of literature and art, dramaturgy, the technique and psychology of make-up, costuming, music, the principles of sound and the history of the cinema," we feel that young Russia cannot very easily have found any more serious occupation. The curriculum strikes one as nothing short of a counterpart of lavish academic schedules indulged in by the would-be paleontologist or the historian of Greek verbs and particles.

HOW SICK IS THE NEWSPAPER?

By McCREADY HUSTON

TWO apparently unrelated events in Philadelphia recently brought into focus the case of the American newspaper and gave justification for a serious question about its future. The first event was the appearance in a Market Street theatre of Joe Penner. This radio entertainer, unknown a year ago, drew into that theatre a larger amount of money than had ever been drawn in that city in a single week. The second event was the death of the *Public Ledger*, the newspaper the name of which had been synonymous with Philadelphia.

Not enough advertising was being received by the *Ledger* to enable it to continue. Yet six blocks away took place a demonstration of the power of radio to limn sharply a condition for those who cared to draw the inference. Philadelphia, in spite of hard times, laid more than \$40,000 on the box-office window sill in order to have a look at a comedian to whom they had been listening once a week for less than a year.

It should be noted that the name of the *Public Ledger* is continued in two ways. The *Evening Public Ledger*, founded by Cyrus H. Curtis during the war, goes on in the newspaper palace built by Mr. Curtis across the street from Independence Hall. The name *Public Ledger* is also carried as a sub-title for the *Inquirer*, which had been another Curtis property. But so far as scores of reporters, sub-editors, special writers and printers were concerned, the *Public Ledger* actually died from inanition and they were out of jobs.

The radio, as a national advertising medium, goes ahead at the expense of the newspaper and the newspaper does not seem to know what to do about it. The news broadcasts, such as that by Lowell Thomas, and the news weeklies, such as *Time*, have been taking from the newspaper its greatest asset, the asset of indispensability. There are new ways to get the news, and the newspaper has been placed on the defensive.

For several years the mortality of newspapers has been ominously progressive. In Pittsburgh the number has shrunk from seven to three. In Philadelphia old titles such as the *North American*, the *Press* and the *Telegraph* disappeared by purchase and extinguishment in an effort to consolidate a bad economic situation.

Cleveland has only one morning newspaper. In Fort Wayne the morning paper recently asked permission to reorganize under the new federal bankruptcy law. In Chicago the trend has been toward as few papers as possible for the last ten years.

The illness of the American newspaper has led to a new social problem which is likely to bring about a New Deal much newer than anything we have seen. That is the problem of the unionization of reporters and sub-editors as a means of protecting their own craft. The Newspaper Guild, organized under the federal grant to workers of freedom to organize without penalty, now claims somewhat more than 7,000 members in a large number of cities. This places many men who write for the newspapers definitely on the side of labor for the first time. For the first time the newspaperman thinks of himself as a worker and not as a professional man.

The inevitable objective of the guild, or union, is the closed shop. The contract which agents of the various guilds are offering the publishers contains a clause which requires the newspaper publisher to apply to the local guild when a replacement is to be made or a new man added. Thus none but guild members would be employed on the newspapers after the contract had been effective for a while. Alarmed by the excess of newspapermen over jobs, the employees seek to control the number of novices entering at the bottom in the same way in which other labor unions control the number of apprentices. The guild has other proposals—such as minimum wages for the news room occupations, depending on length of service. It desires dismissal payments, vacations with pay, and the standard NRA hours per week. But those are details. The social question is raised by the fact that men who deal with ideas and transmit thought and information, have been forced by necessity to throw in their lot with labor.

There are, literally, no jobs open in daily journalism. The reporter who once walked from one news room to another and from one city to another knows that the surplus created by mergers and deaths has put an end to that old freedom of movement. He knows also that it has dimmed his hopes of improving his salary. He knows that his job could be filled a thousand times by men now idle. That situation, naturally, is reflected in his state of mind, which in turn affects his work. The buoyancy which once was the mark of the reporter has been supplanted by a seriousness and a concern which makes it hard to write a sparkling story. The same note of pessimism can be detected among editorial writers, the men who are supposed to mold public opinion. They see the shrinkage of newspapers, the reduction of competition, the lowering level of the reservoir of positions. And while this tone is creep-

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ing through newspaperdom, radio entertainment, the news broadcast and the news weeklies strike a dominant and a cheerful note. Because they are coming up.

I was impressed by the plight of the newspaper the night the Mollisons crashed in Connecticut on their flight across the Atlantic. While the newspapers were getting the first reports of the accident into the early editions and on the street, the radio reporters had gone to the scene, had their microphones right beside the wreck, and were telling the listeners at thousands of receiving sets the story of the flight and its unfortunate ending. When President Roosevelt was inaugurated, when that momentous session of Congress opened to wrestle with the banking crisis, the microphone, set up in not one but many rooms of the Capitol, enabled the people all over the country to actually sit in on one of the most dramatic scenes in our history. The radio reporting of football games and other spectacles is too well known to need reference beyond the remark that it tends to make the newspaper report the next day seem stale and tame.

Recently I had something to do, in a professional way, with a primary campaign in which there were nearly twenty candidates for the nomination for governor. Again it was the radio that obtruded as the obvious, the necessary, medium for reaching the people. Newspaper reports and opinion were valuable; and in politics the newspaper remains a force. But it was evident that the people expected to hear the candidates in their homes and, regardless of the cost, most of the candidates met that expectation.

Nor is the story finished. Television is ahead. What that will do to the newspaper worker nobody can foresee.

The newspaper is hit hardest in the business office. Advertising of goods sold nationally, as distinguished from local retail store advertising, is the source of revenue most affected. And behind that is the adjustment of the masses of the people to new ways of receiving information, comment and entertainment.

It is not only possible but probable that we shall have a new type of newspaper, as well as fewer papers. We began to see it a few years ago in the tabloid, which has survived its original stigma and in a number of instances—notably the *New York Daily News*—has obtained a readership never dreamed of by the standard-size papers. There is also the weekly newspaper, the newspaper of summary, which is merely a modern application of the time-honored country weekly of the small towns. The large city newspaper of standard size, loaded with expensive magazine features, too many news services, foreign bureaus, pictorial sections, and other costly departments, is the one which has suffered. Strangely enough

the country weekly, with its small overhead, its absence of pretension, and its good reputation in its own little area, is doing very well.

Unionization of reporters and editors may help those who are now working on papers which will accept guild contracts and submit to the rule of unionism. But it will not create more jobs for the several thousand of trained city newspapermen now walking the streets. It will not restore pay to former levels as long as the excess continues. Probably this generation of newspapermen and women will be the sacrifices to the new day. Many of them will have to pass out of journalism. Improvident as the average newspaper worker is, most of them are going to have a hard time. It is a case of "Little Man, what now?" with the majority.

The newspaper has had not only the depression to combat. It has had the depression plus the new ways of making news known. It has suffered a third intangible loss in having to meet General Johnson's ideas of the working week before it had been able to scale down from the structure fashionable during the period of affluence. Add to those things an inability to break habits developed between 1920 and 1930. While the *Ledger* was dying, three *Ledger* men were sent to Florida to report the Loughran-Carnera fight. Two baseball reporters were already there. Either of those could have reported the fight. And an Associated Press report would have been sufficient, even though Loughran was a Philadelphian. Such allocation of funds is not lost upon the rank and file of workers.

The malaise of the newspaper has compelled its remaining employees to organize. Whither, journalism?

New Neighbors down on Lem's Place

They never fill the lamps until it's dark,
Nor split the wood until the fire's dying;
They breathe upon the last exhausted spark
To hold it bright until the boy comes crying,
"Open the door!" . . . and staggers through with grins,
His arms around a heavy load of birch;
He lets it tumble down among the tins
Of milk for cats, then gives a backward lurch,
Being relieved of cargo, towards the wall,
Bumping his elbow smartly.

"Lucky thing,"
They tell him, "that you didn't really fall
And hurt yourself!"

And then they kind of sing,
Laying the sticks along the cooling ash,
Hunting for coals with cheerful, little pokes;
Some people like to call them shiftless trash,
They're pleasant neighbors, though, . . . untidy folks!

MARTHA BANNING THOMAS.

THOUGHTS ON THE NEW DEAL

By JOHANNES MATTERN

FOR THOSE who have not already decided to their own satisfaction that the New Deal is a failure, the most vital question of present-day practical politics and economics is that of the prospects of the New Deal. To discuss this question with any degree of intelligence we must begin with the consideration of the purposes, the objectives, of that momentous experiment.

In brief, the objectives of the New Deal may be defined as: recovery from the latest crisis, reforms of our economic system to guarantee the permanence of recovery, and the establishment of such reforms within the general structure of our existing political and social order.

What could be more reasonable, more generally acceptable, than such a program, provided that it is possible of realization, provided that recovery can be effected under our present social order and that recovery can be made permanent by reforms without fundamental changes in our present political and social structure! Convincing proof that the New Deal so far has not led to a fundamental departure from our traditional democratic political and social system is found in the fact that there is considerable and articulate opposition to the New Deal, an opposition based on the conviction or assumption that the New Deal is impossible of fulfilment for the reason that its aims or objectives are mutually exclusive. But while this opposition agrees in its negative attitude toward the New Deal, or with regard to the chances of its success, it is hopelessly divided on the alternative or substitute measures to be applied to remedy the admittedly existing crisis and to prevent the recurrence of such crises in the future.

There are in the foreground of the opposition those who remind us that we have had numerous and serious crises before and that we have succeeded in bringing back normal conditions after each succeeding crisis of the past. Relying on the law of probability they can see no reason why we should not succeed again and again in bringing back normal conditions after each future crisis as future depressions may and will come rolling along. They confidently assert today that all that was needed in the spring of 1933 was the proper enforcement of existing legislation and the enactment of such new laws as might have been re-

A constant and seldom required need for perspective is characteristic of this thoroughly democratic time. What are the primary objectives society is attempting to reach? How can unessentials be distinguished from matters of dominant importance? The function of political thinkers, among whom the writer of the following paper holds a distinguished position, is to keep the main outlines clear and to sunder policy from detail. Debate concerning these is of enduring value and immediate urgency.—The Editors.

quired to put an end to flagrant tax evasions, fraudulent investments, unauthorized speculation with trust funds and with commercial and savings deposits, unethical competition, and perhaps a few other such practises admittedly crying for the vengeance of heaven.

For the rest, this group holds, we should have let nature take its course. Nature, through its own laws, would take care of overproduction, of underconsumption, of faulty distribution, of unemployment, and of all the evils in their trail. In other words, this group holds that the recovery program of the New Deal goes too far off the beaten path, and that its reform program is not essential to recovery, but is an impediment to recovery. The argument of this group deserves a hearing, it requires consideration. The weakness of the argument lies not in its logic but in its premises.

In the first place, existing legislation has proved unenforceable under the prevailing economic system which operates at best within the law, but outside the moral code. There is then no reason for the assumption that the required new legislation would be more capable of enforcement, once normal conditions have been restored, as long as this amorality of the economic order is allowed to prevail.

In the second place, the argument in favor of the law of nature as the medium of restoration of normal conditions can effectively be turned against the advocates of this process. The law of nature is the law under which the beasts of the jungle prey upon each other. To the degree to which we have allowed the law of nature to rule our conduct, to that extent have we allowed the socially strong to prey upon the socially weak, in defiance of the laws designed by man, as a rational being, to counteract the devastating effect of the reign of the law of nature in the relations of human beings in civilized society. Hence it is precisely our undue reliance upon the law of nature which is responsible for the situation in which we find ourselves today.

In the third place, with, and as a result of, every preceding recovery, our social structure has become more complicated: industry has become more intensified, trade and commerce more interdependent, the relations of employer and labor more strained. Hence the effects of every re-

curing crisis have become more far-reaching, more acute, more serious, in that more people have become unemployed, the task of caring for them by means of charity or otherwise more difficult, and the chance of bringing back normal conditions less certain, more remote.

This first group, which holds that the reform program of the New Deal in its present character and extent is not essential to recovery, constitutes the great majority of the opposition. A small minority, despairing of the possibility and effectiveness of reforms within the limits of our existing political and social system, anticipates the need for a complete recasting of our social and political order.

This brings us now to the question of the extent and kind of reforms advocated and approved by the promoters and supporters of the New Deal and in particular to that phase of the question which deals with the possibility of effecting such reforms within the framework of our existing political and social order.

Again we have to take cognizance of two groups among those supporting the New Deal and insisting upon the need for such reforms. One group, apparently the minority, holds that reforms as measures designed to make recovery permanent, should be effected after normal conditions have been established. Mr. Maynard Keynes, the English economist, has addressed an open letter to President Roosevelt offering advice to the effect that for the present the administration's main efforts be directed toward recovery, leaving reform to the period after normal conditions have been restored. This seems sound advice from an academic point of view. The trouble with it is that it fails to consider sufficiently the realities of human nature.

Mr. Keynes's advice is based on the two assumptions: first, that such reforms can be effected after a return of normal conditions, i.e., after recovery; and, second, that recovery can be effected without immediate reforms. Both of these assumptions are challenged and rejected by the promoters of the New Deal and by the majority of its supporters. Those who challenge and reject these assumptions believe that the time to effect reforms is now when the agencies and forces which will be most affected by such reforms are still pliable and receptive, and not after recovery has once more steadied their nerves and hardened their determination to persist in the methods of the past, in the gambler's irrational pretense that fate may be kinder in the future.

So we come to the consideration of the extent and kind of reforms called for in the opinion of both promoters and supporters of the New Deal. As to their extent and kind, individuals may differ sincerely and intelligently, according to their in-

dividual comprehension of the social needs, of the remedies available to meet these needs, and according to their individual capacity for coordinating needs and remedies, or remedies and needs. But certain it is that the great majority of the supporters of the New Deal agree with its promoters in the demand for a deep-reaching regeneration of the spirit and practises of business. Again, individuals may differ honestly and intelligently as to whether or not the special measures designed to effect such deep-reaching regeneration remain within the scope of our present political and social structure. But equally certain it is also that the majority of the supporters of the New Deal proceeds on the assumption that its promoters intend to keep their reform measures within that structure. This implies that the New Deal can affect its reforms only by way of mobilizing for both recovery and reform the forces available in our social and political system. Hence the promoters of the New Deal proceed to guide, regulate and control the relations of business, labor and consumer as the basic units of our social structure. By business, as the term is here used, is meant, according to our prevailing ideology, the employers in factories, financial institutions and commercial enterprises of all kinds. The administration of the New Deal undertakes to induce business to reach agreements with both labor and consumer for the definition of the terms of their mutual relations. Such relations depend essentially upon prices charged and paid for goods produced and sold, services rendered, and wages paid to those producing goods and rendering services. The parties to these agreements are grouped according to the character of the goods produced or the services rendered. Their agreements, having received the approval and signature of the President, are legally binding upon all concerned.

In theory such a procedure seems fair and reasonable; in practise it works, by force of circumstance, to the advantage of one of the three parties—business. Having the advantage of large-scale organization and the opportunity of using that organization for the purpose of strengthening its position in the New Deal agreements, business has so far been able to outdo both labor and consumer in securing favorable terms of prices, wages and hours of labor. Labor, at best only partly organized, is weakening itself by the struggle over the closed and open shop, and for the recognition of the free union as against company union favored by business. The consumer is not and cannot be organized effectively as a class.

Of course, the promoters of the New Deal realize that they must establish not only in theory but also in practise a basis of equality in

the bargaining power of the three forces concerned. To that end the attempt is made to hold business to the acknowledgment of all labor organizations recognized by law as competent bargaining partners, though such attempts have so far lacked enforcement. As to the consumer, the government has established the Consumers' Advisory Board and the Consumers' Counsel, the first in the Industrial and the second in the Agricultural Administration. The Consumers' Advisory Board and the Consumers' Counsel are charged with the task of protecting the consumers' interests. But under our social and political system the degree of protection to be expected for the consumers' interests from the government against other pressure groups depends upon the degree of pressure exerted by the consumers' groups themselves. Hence the promoters of the New Deal in their attempt to act impartially are calling upon existing organized groups conscious of their interests as consumers, to bring to bear the pressure needed. Such organized groups as the consumers' cooperatives, organizations of teachers, of government employees, of engineers, women's clubs, churches, and many others. Even farmers' and labor organizations may at times act in the interest of the consumer.

Thus the old two-fisted fight between business and labor is to become a three-cornered struggle between business, labor and consumer. The conception is one which fits into the American social and political ideology and technique. It is an analogy in the economic arena of the party system and the lobby in the sphere of politics. According to this conception, prices, wages, hours and condition of labor are to be established in agreements formulated as the result of the free interplay of the dynamic forces of business, labor and consumers' interests. Each will try to secure for its own side as much as possible, and the other will try to concede as little. The government will be the umpire in the game, nothing less and nothing more.

Do reformist measures fitting into such a scheme hold out any hope of success of the kind expected from it by its sponsors? I have pointed out the analogy of the scheme with the party system in the political field. The analogy applies to the motives guiding the contestants and to the methods which will be applied in the struggle. Since methods are dictated by motives, we can confine ourselves to an examination of the motives in question.

The promoters of the New Deal, foremost the President and Mr. Wallace, have shown vision and courage in their insistence that the motives and mechanics of recovery and reform be predicated upon a new attitude in our social outlook. The new attitude, as they conceive it, implies that in future business be conducted on the basis of

the practical realization of the mutual dependence of the profit and welfare of the employer and the security and welfare of labor and consumer. It is an attitude which visualized the transformation of business from an activity regulated by a technical observance of the law to an activity guided by the demands of practical morality.

With the acceptance of such an attitude by all concerned, recovery and reform could certainly go hand in hand today, and measures of reform could with equal certainty remain within the framework of our present social and political order. Without such an attitude the measures of reform contemplated and inaugurated under the New Deal cannot but lead to a period of hopeless struggle between the dynamic forces of employer, labor and consumer, a struggle which will sap and waste the moral and physical strength of the nation, leaving desolation, despair, bitterness and anarchy in its trail. Without such an attitude, the result of this struggle will be the demonstration of the ineffectiveness of all measures of reform within the framework of our existing social and political order and the eventual overthrow of this order by violence and bloodshed in favor of some form of dictatorship representing the strongest of the forces contending for supremacy.

In the last analysis this result would be proof that what we approvingly refer to as our existing social and political order is only the empty mechanism, the devitalized shadow, of what it was in its formative years. Apparently there is more at stake than both opponents and supporters of the New Deal seem to realize. The demand of the hour transcends the need of recovery and reform, even that of a new social attitude; it calls for a reexamination of the concept and a reform of the practises of democracy.

Saying Aldebaran

Seeing the stars, remember those who named them:
Swart men who gazed beyond their sleeping herds
To fiercer flocks, unshepherded—and tamed them
With grave, mysterious, and lovely words.

Terror peopled the darkness, prowled its canyons
A jackal shape deriding torch and blade.
Out of their desperate need they found companions—
Algol—Altair—and were no more afraid.

Though their own fires might ashen and fall asunder,
While hill to hill gave back the leopard's cry,
Oblivious, they shaped in shivering wonder
The strange new syllables that would not die—

One lost, consummate poet of the clan
Saying "Vega," and one, "Aldebaran."

TED OLSON.

RELIGIOUS STUDY CLUBS

By EDWIN V. O'HARA

EVERY thoughtful Catholic must be deeply concerned with the problem of adult religious education because it is so inextricably interwoven with every effort to advance the cause of religion. Our lay societies will not flourish without enlightened leadership. The lack of such direction has permitted our most ambitious and promising lay organizations to enter on a disastrous decline. Our able periodicals languish for lack of a Catholic reading public. The ablest writers will exercise their talents in the service of religion in vain if our Catholic people continue to lack interest in topics of intellectual character. In practically every parish and mission there is need of lay catechists to teach our youth. But classes in catechism will be jejune and fruitless if the teachers can do no more than rehearse the formal answers in the book. Priests are directed to preach instructional sermons to a people whose acquaintance with Holy Scripture and church history is so limited that biblical and historical references must be explained in detail if the reference is not to be considered merely as learned lumber. Our laity must represent the Church to non-Catholics, few of whom ever meet the priest. But to say that the laity are inarticulate in the face of non-Catholic interrogations is to confess that they have no adequate mastery of Catholic doctrine. We know that parents are divinely commissioned to teach religion to their children. How shall they be fitted to fulfil that sacred commission is a question which has by no means found a practical solution. These and a score of similar considerations point to the need of a program of adult religious education. It is the purpose of this paper to discuss the religious study club as the basis for such a program.

What is a religious study club? It is a small group of people who meet weekly for definite periods of the year, under selected leadership, to improve by cooperative study and discussion their mastery of the Catholic religion. This definition insists upon: (1) Small groups, rarely of more than ten or twelve members, for otherwise discussion would be impossible. (2) Regular weekly meetings for considerable periods of the year, because continuity of study cannot be achieved if the meetings are held less frequently. It has been found that two sessions in the year—ten weeks in the fall and ten weeks in the spring—can be successfully maintained. (3) Selected leadership for each club, the necessary qualities being common sense and generosity of service rather than brilliancy or scholarship. (4) Cooperative study and discussion as the method of

study clubs, rather than the lecture method. (5) The simple immediate purpose of improving among its members their mastery of the teaching and practise of the Catholic religion.

A better knowledge of what the study club is may be gained by pointing out what it is not. The study club is not a lecture course. (For that happy dispensation its members may be duly grateful.) The reason for ruling out the lecture from the study club will be seen if we ask why Catholics are so generally unable to explain their religion to non-Catholics. Why is it that when asked a simple question they say, "Go and see Father Brown"? It is not lack of intelligence, for our Catholic people measure up with their neighbors in every field requiring intelligence. It is not even lack of knowledge of their religion, for they have been listening to instructions from the pulpit since childhood, and to say that our people lack knowledge of their religion would involve a more devastating criticism of the pulpit than I am willing to entertain. What then is the explanation? I think it lies in the fact that our people have not been trained to give expression to their knowledge. They have been listening to sermons and lectures all their lives. They have been passive recipients, two-gallon jugs, into which knowledge has been poured. But real mastery of any subject is not gained in that fashion. We never have mastery of a subject until we learn to express our knowledge. Now this is the purpose of the study club—to give mastery so that Catholics will be able to speak of their religion as freely and as intelligently as they can speak of economic or political topics concerning which they have thought and have had experience. This is the reason why a lecture course is not a study club program, and why the study club leader is not to be considered as a lecturer. Indeed he will probably be a far more successful leader if he has no ambitions as a lecturer. When a study club begins, many of its members will be tongue-tied when asked to discuss the topics assigned. Presently they will acquire the vocabulary—find the right word—and in a few lessons begin to realize the vast difference between following a lecture and possessing a mastery of a subject which enables one to discuss and explain it. This mastery of the Catholic religion is the purpose of the religious study club.

So far we have been concerned with the individual study club. It is, however, only when the study club is a unit of a wider program, preferably on a diocesan plan, that the local clubs can ordinarily hope for permanence and fruit-

fulness. There are many reasons for this conclusion. But one basic consideration comes into view at once when the question of a planned program for the club is raised. General planning in any field is a highly specialized capacity. To expect to find this talent in every group that wishes to enter upon a study of their religion is to court disappointment. Consequently, the plans for many clubs should be uniform and the club should be able to call on the best talent for planning available in the diocese. Just as a diocesan superintendent plans the uniform program in hundreds of parish schools, so a diocesan director of adult education will make for the effectiveness and consequent permanence of hundreds of religious study clubs.

Many advantages arise from unity of study club planning in a diocese. We have found it possible in the Diocese of Great Falls to organize two ten-week sessions a year—the fall session opening in October and closing before Christmas; the spring session closing with Easter. A uniform subject throughout the diocese was chosen for each session and a program for each lesson carefully outlined in a printed manual. A diocesan campaign for leaders in each parish discovered many competent ones in the most unexpected places. Plans were made for the training of these leaders and definite outlines for the preparation of each lesson were drawn up by able educators. Books and pamphlets useful to all clubs were listed with a special view to keeping expenses within the reach of the average purse. Finally, suitable articles in the diocesan paper from week to week brought suggestions to all the clubs concerning the topic currently under discussion.

A final and most important advantage of diocesan organization of study clubs arises from the stimulus it gives to the study program in each parish. It is unnecessary to say that I am speaking in this paper of a program of adult religious education under the supervision of bishops and pastors. Otherwise it would not be Catholic education. A diocesan program recognizes parish unities and provides pastoral direction without which neither adult nor child education in religion can progress far. And further, it makes possible the widest possible employment of the Diocesan Council of Men and Women in furthering the cause of an educated laity.

The religious study club program in the Diocese of Great Falls has its origin in a pastoral letter issued on the Feast of the Holy Family in January, 1930. As a result, 65 study clubs were organized throughout the diocese to follow during Lent an outlined course on the work of the parent as educator of his children. That fall 150 clubs studied the ceremonies of the Mass for ten weeks, and in the spring of 1931 the number grew to 200 clubs studying the Sacrifice of the Mass. In

the autumn of 1931, the clubs took up the Parent-Educator again. By the spring of 1932 every parish had a chairman of study clubs appointed by the pastor, and 400 clubs began the study of the Life of Christ following a detailed and uniform program. Several parishes had twenty and some as high as thirty clubs with an average of ten members each. The training of leaders was undertaken by the clergy with the aid of lay assistants. Club meetings were held for the most part in the homes of members. Some clubs are composed exclusively of men or of women, but most of them have both men and women members. The advantage of husband and wife belonging to the same study club is derived not merely from consideration of conveniences, but from higher motives of parent education. If husband and wife attend the same study club, avenues of religious discussion are opened between them and religious topics will become common in their household, to the instruction and edification of their children.

In our study clubs the leader is a member of the laity. This is due in the first place to the physical impossibility of the pastor's attending every session of the clubs when there may be from ten to fifty clubs in a parish. It is also due to a frank recognition of the fact that the constant presence of the pastor will have a tendency to repress unduly free expression by themselves and leads to turning the meeting into a lecture by the pastor. Even if the pastor were always prepared to give a lecture on the topic being discussed, the purpose of a study club would be frustrated by being converted into a lecture. On the other hand, an occasional lecture is desirable. This is best arranged for at a joint meeting of several clubs, making it worth while to have a well-prepared lecture and not merely a rambling talk.

Twice a year District Institutes of study club leaders are held in connection with the district meetings of the Diocesan Councils of Men and Women. As a result of interchange of ideas and experiences, there is being developed a technique of religious study club leadership which tends to establish standards for newly enrolled leaders. Needless to say, the leader is of pivotal importance and his selection and training is a prime concern of the pastor.

The fruit of the religious study club accrues directly to the benefit of the local parish. Religious topics are as likely to be discussed when parishioners meet as bridge or golf. In a parish with twenty-five study clubs reading the New Testament with Fouard's "Life of Christ" in hand, the pastor's sermons on the miracles or parables or teachings of Our Lord will have an appreciative audience. Catholic publications will find interested readers, and local Catholic Action will become related to the drift of the Holy Father's encyclicals.

SEVEN DAYS' SURVEY

The Church.—His Holiness Pope Pius XI will broadcast a message to the Eucharistic Congress at Buenos Aires and the entire world, Sunday, October 14. * * * The Pontifical Association for the Propagation of the Faith announces that 18,028 foreign and native priests, 8,755 coadjutor Brothers, 50,555 foreign and native Sisters, 74,147 catechists and 62,087 teachers are now working in the mission fields of the Church. * * * Declaring that "liturgy is the public, official and corporate prayer and sacrifice of a corporate body—the *ecclesia*, the Church, composed of priests and people," and stressing the fact that the Mass is offered by both "the priests and the people," Bishop Schlarman announced that deeper appreciation of the Mass would be the Holy Year objective of the diocese of Peoria, Illinois. * * * The first fifty presentations of this year's Passion Play at Oberammergau were attended by almost 300,000 people, about 50,000 of them foreigners, mostly English and American. * * * The current issue of the *Scientific American* carries an article by Reverend Ignatius W. Cox, S. J., appraising sterilization from scientific and moral points of view. * * * Passage by the present Congress of an amendment to the Mexican Constitution providing "education that will be socialistic in its orientations and postulates" in all primary and secondary schools was held certain. Twenty thousand Mexican pilgrims went to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, September 2, to pray for the cessation of religious persecution. * * * Cardinal Fumasoni-Biondi, Prefect of the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, and formerly Apostolic Delegate to the United States, reports that there are 6,000,000 slaves in the world today—"in the remote corners of Ethiopia, Liberia, China, and in a number of Moslem countries." * * * Monsignor Carroll, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of New York, died in Connecticut, September 16. A great throng attended the funeral Mass celebrated by Cardinal Hayes.

The Nation.—Judging by headlines in the New York newspapers, the remarkable showing of the English yacht Endeavour in the first races with the American yacht Rainbow was exciting the greatest interest of the nation. These triumphs had the always appealing qualities of fine, grim sportsmanship against apparently insuperable obstacles. The Endeavour had been decidedly outsailed in the first contest which was declared no race because the dying of the breeze caused the yachts to exceed the time limit. In our next issue we will be able to record a more complete chapter on these richly traditional races for the America's Cup. * * * Considerable excitement was caused in New York City by the passage of a municipal provision for a lottery to raise funds for unemployment relief. The Mayor considered the excitement premature as he thought it virtually certain that a municipal lottery would violate state and federal laws against gambling. * * * The resignation of Nathan Straus, jr., as New York State

director of the National Emergency Council, precipitated a clash between Donald H. Richberg, executive director of the council, and NRA chief, General Johnson, who had appointed Mrs. Anne Lederer Rosenberg to succeed Mr. Straus. Mr. Richberg denied General Johnson's authority to do this. President Roosevelt was reported to be hurrying his plans clarifying the legislative, executive and judicial functions and organizations of the NRA. * * * Constitution Day was widely observed throughout the nation on September 17. Addresses on whether or not the country was drifting from its traditional safe moorings interested audiences in a great variety of cities.

The Wide World.—Russia entered the League of Nations on the platform of "practical politics," thus cementing the new anti-Germany bloc carefully formed by France. Ten nations expressed open or veiled disapprovals. Details of the address by M. Guiseppe Motta are given elsewhere in this issue. * * * Orders from Mussolini stipulated that all Italian males between the ages of eight and thirty-three were to undergo compulsory military training. "The purpose of the first stage of compulsory pre-military training is to give boys a passion for military life through frequent contact with the armed forces whose warlike glories and traditions will be remembered," declared Il Duce. * * * Germany officially turned down the "Eastern Locarno" plan recently suggested. No secret was made of the fact that revision of the Polish frontier is still an objective of Reich diplomacy. It may be added that no other answer from Berlin was possible or seriously anticipated. * * * Bavarian Lutherans strongly protested government action against their bishop, Dr. Otto Meiser, who has opposed certain policies sponsored by the Nazi Reichsbischof. Thousands marched in parades through Munich and Nuremberg. A number of arrests were made. Press comment indicated that Hitler personally was determined to enforce the official concept of Protestantism. * * * Dutch spokesmen at Geneva strongly urged monetary stabilization on the world, but met with ardent support only in Swiss and French circles. The week brought with it a comparative rise in the value of the dollar against most European currencies. * * * A raging fire virtually destroyed Nome, Alaska, once the center of the great gold rush. The 1,500 inhabitants of the city were left homeless and without food supplies. Some relief was furnished by the Red Cross, and it was hinted that the United States might undertake to finance the rebuilding of the town. * * * Austria in the middle of September appeared the happy recipient of considerable economic recovery. Gold and foreign exchange reserves were higher, savings bank deposits had increased somewhat (there was a gain of 20,000,000 schillings during August) and the deficit for the current year seemed to be relatively small.

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Textile Strike.—At the beginning of the third week the Associated Press estimated there were 421,000 men out, compared with 400,000 a week earlier. After the riots in Rhode Island described last week, Governor Green convoked the State Legislature to ask it to call in the regular army. The army was prepared for duty, but the Rhode Island Legislature refused to call upon it, and the situation eased. On September 14, General Johnson stated, "The present strike is an absolute violation of that understanding [with the union] and I must say here, with all the solemnity which should characterize such an announcement, that if such agreements of organized labor are worth no more than this one, then that institution is not such a responsible instrumentality as can make contracts on which this country can rely." This announcement was denied and the resignation of General Johnson was demanded by the United Textile Workers, the A. F. of L., thirty-five Philadelphia unions and numerous other labor organizations. The strike committee has received support and money from the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the United Mine Workers and other of the largest American unions. On September 18, the executive council of the textile union decided to empower the strike committee to call out 110,000 workers in the rayon, rug, carpet and dyeing industries. The report of the President's Textile Inquiry Board was expected by Secretary Perkins, September 20, and subsequent efforts of mediation would "depend on the opportunities or on the need of the moment." According to federal relief authorities, strikers were receiving exactly the same treatment from relief agencies as all other claimants. About 15,000 National Guardsmen were on duty in the South and 5,000 in New England. Mills in the South, especially in Georgia, were trying to open under armed guards who prevented militant picketing. Martial law held in Georgia and 126 picketers were interned "for the duration." George Sloan, of the Cotton Textile Institute, declared, "Now it is a fight to the finish with no let-up. We know where we stand with the NRA." Strike leaders were little less adamant.

Wisconsin Primaries.—Political ardor is not dead in Wisconsin, and the primaries conducted on September 18 assembled practically everything in the way of parties and candidates which it is possible to print on a ballot. The "Progressive" party made a new appearance in behalf of the La Follettes, who sponsored the New Deal with some added emphasis on the Left side. While complete returns are not available as this is being written, the trend would seem to favor the Democrats with the incumbent Governor, A. G. Schmedeman, far in the lead. Heavy votes were also rolled up in favor of Progressive and Democratic candidates for the senatorial nomination. Interest attaches to the fact that John M. Callahan, former ardent Al Smith supporter and prominent Catholic, was slightly ahead of other Democratic would-be senators. A picturesque Republican nominee, John B. Chappel, editor and straight-from-the-shoulder orator, had no rival for the Republican senatorial nomination and promised an open fight on the New Deal. The Progressive vote was

way behind what Democrats were able to roll up but considerably ahead of what the Republicans secured. Until the skies clear and the atmosphere calms down it will be impossible to state whether the balloting foreshadows a move to the Right or a continuance of the Leftward drift.

Arms Inquiry Developments.—The Senate investigation of the munitions industry entered its third week of disturbing disclosures. It was revealed that the du Ponts had done a business of \$1,245,000,000 during the World War and that total dividends paid from 1915 through 1918 amounted to 458 percent of the par value of the original stock, which was \$100. The Curtiss-Wright Company, airplane manufacturers, had tried to secure President Hoover as a rival "salesman" to counterbalance the impression made by the Prince of Wales in South America. The du Ponts were accused of anti-embargo activities in the War and Navy Departments as well as conscious efforts to circumvent the terms of the Versailles Treaty in regard to the rearming of Germany. It was shown that of the United Aircraft and Transport Company's \$1,753,648 business in England and on the Continent the first eight months of this year, \$1,445,913 was with Germany. The same company had made an agreement with the Bavarian Motor Works by which it was estimated the latter could make annually at least 250 high-speed, air-cooled engines, one-third of the airplane strength of the United States Navy. A letter from State Department files declared that the government regarded with disfavor "the export of arms ammunition and implements of war to Germany." Secretary Hull made public a letter of his to an aircraft maker to the same effect. The Senate investigating committee told the press that they were hastening to introduce as much evidence as possible into the record before "outside pressure" forced them to curtail the inquiry.

Poor Man's Court.—New York City inaugurated a new small claims branch of the Municipal Court on September 17, which will deal with actions involving less than \$50. The Municipal Court was originally designed to secure justice for the poor, but there were many indications that it was not successfully carrying out that function. Fifty percent of claims under \$100 have regularly been dropped because of excessive costs in pursuing them. Law suits generally have taken anywhere from two to seven years to bring to conclusion. During 1933 alone, 36,000 applications were made to the New York Legal Aid Society for free legal service. The new court is modeled after one in Boston, although Cleveland established the first one of the type in 1913. The costs are standardized at \$1.25. The claimant gives the details of his case to a clerk who writes them down in non-technical language. Notice is sent to the defendant the same day the claim is entered. The litigants may literally "tell it to the judge," because no attorney is required. Rules of procedure are waived, but, of course, decisions are reached according to ordinary substantive law. Cases are finally settled in from five to eleven days. During

the first session, claims were made on a deposit on an apartment, for the price of trousers ruined by a waiter, for unpaid wages and for professional fees.

Art in the New Deal.—A group of educators held a symposium in New York recently to discuss "The Place of Art in the New Deal." Stock was taken of the public support of art education, music, especially the symphony concerts supported by the government as part of work relief, painting, drama, puppet shows, and portable theatres. Mayor LaGuardia sent word that he is "convinced it is his duty to afford opportunities for developing the happiness of citizens as well as to govern them." Dr. Ira S. Wile warned, "We must not let the cultural benefits of the New Deal become tied up with the economic problems and thus pass out of the picture with the return of prosperity." Miss Constance Warren, president of Sarah Lawrence College, stated, "The fundamental thesis of recreation is that it shall function for the individual concerned. . . . The recreation which fits individual needs most closely is the creative type. Attempts at mass recreation are comparatively futile." Meanwhile, on September 19, an exhibition of oils, water-colors, sculptures, sketches for murals and ceramics opened at the New York Museum of Modern Art. There are 135 works selected from the approximately 15,000 undertaken under the Public Works of Art Projects. The P.W.A. spent \$1,408,381 hiring 3,500 needy artists, including Negroes and thirty Indians, and the works accomplished belong to the government. They are all designed for the embellishment of public buildings, and although not startling in their modernism, they reflect the contemporary movement toward repopularization of the fine arts.

Scientists Meet.—At Cleveland scientists from the Mellon Institute for Industrial Research of Pittsburgh told the American Chemical Society that a new drug, a derivative from quinine, had proved successful in treating all types of pneumonia in animals. In a few human cases, where other known means had failed, the new drug had produced "very encouraging" results. Dr. Aristid von Grosse announced that element 91, protactinium, had been isolated in its pure metallic state. In a year or two the pure protactinium, which is at present rarer than radium, will give birth to pure actinium, an element 140 times more active than radium. At Aberdeen, Scotland, the British Association for the Advancement of Science discussed economic planning and strongly disparaged the New Deal. Later, at a stormy session on whether animals think rationally, Dr. Haan of Amsterdam University declared that even an ameba could be observed to exhibit sudden changes in direction, "and its reactions in avoiding some chemical substance in its path may be regarded as a sort of striving to reach a goal." Dr. Knight of Aberdeen University replied that ". . . it is so easy to be misled by a single incident. Anecdote simply has no place in the proper method of scientific inquiry." At Venice Senator Guglielmo Marconi, inventor of wireless telegraphy, told the International Congress of Electro-Radio Biology, which included eight Nobel Prize winners, that

"the mystery of life is certainly the most persistent problem ever placed before the thought of man. . . . The inability of science to solve it is absolute. This would be frightening were it not for faith."

Juno and the Peacock.—First-class publicity copy arrived in New York with Sean O'Casey, Irish dramatist who has steamed into New York hoping to do his bit in big-time stuff. Having doffed his sweater and obediently worn his spectacles, the erstwhile observer of life in the Dublin slums gave evidence that, in more respects than one, he is the favorite choice as runner-up to the near-late G. B. Shaw. Diplomatic enough to pay his respects to the New York stage (which he hadn't seen), Mr. O'Casey was thumbs down on the theatre of London and Dublin (with which he is familiar). Barrie, he said, "dishonored God by implying that He should have populated the world with Peter Pans." The word "Celtic," appropriately timed, produced the expected sputter: "All that—Celtic twilights and mornings and afternoons—is the invention of Anglo-Irish romantics like George Russell." Nothing was reported of brushes now historical with Yeats and others. "My friend Shakespeare" came in for praise, however, and of the Elizabethans Mr. O'Casey said: "We must use our own imaginations and our own experience to mold something on the same scale that they used, something with the same beautiful poetic force." On the other hand official welcomer G. J. Nathan reported that "Within the Gates," forthcoming departure from the methods which led to "Juno and the Paycock," was "the greatest play of the last twenty years." Having listened to that phrase a number of times before, the reporters went away saddened and chastened.

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Jobs and Payrolls.—The latest report of the Labor Department discloses that during August there was a net increase in industrial employment of 15,000 persons and an increase in employment on federal and state projects of 30,000 persons. The federal index of factory workers was 79.4, compared to 76.3 in 1933. The wage index gained 5.44, with an estimated payroll advance of \$1,000,000 a week. Employees on public payrolls in August numbered 1,261,000 and their total earnings for the month were \$65,450,000. More than 1,210,000 were engaged in the Federal Emergency Work program, an increase of 12,000 over July. The increase in factory employment was estimated to be 73,000 but this was offset by declines in some non-manufacturing industries. Canning and preserving employment had a seasonal gain of 61 percent over July. Notable decreases in employment were 10.5 percent in the aircraft industry, 5 percent in transportation (though payrolls in this occupation were 6.9 percent above those in July), and 6 percent in automobile manufacturing (though payrolls increased 8.2 percent). The durable goods group showed a decrease of 1.9 percent in employment, the index for the group being 67.3, while the index of employment for the non-durable goods groups was 90.7. Statistics indicate that marked increase all along the line in September is normal.

THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Judgment Day

FOR SEVERAL years now, Elmer Rice has been one of our most important playwrights. At the time his "Street Scene" appeared, there was even reason to believe that he might become one of our few great playwrights. That play had a touch of poetic undertone, running deep beneath the superficialities of the play, which held promise of a future development as yet unrealized. In "Judgment Day," Mr. Rice has fashioned a melodrama boiling over with hate of European dictatorships and their methods. He has placed the action in "a capital of south-eastern Europe" where the Orthodox Church is the state religion and where the ruling class is Slavic. This pleasant device does not, however, conceal the real objective of his impassioned attack which is a country lying north-west of southeastern Europe. Since Mr. Rice is amiably trying to avoid international complications, we might as well respect his thin pretence and mention no names!

The play has certain black and white exaggerations, both of villainy and nobility, which make it subject to mild criticism. It would gain in effectiveness, both as melodrama and as a human document, by more subtlety. But its cumulative effect is almost overwhelming through sheer intensity. Three people are on trial before the High Court of Justice for attempted assassination of "our beloved leader, Grigori Vesnic, the Minister-President." One of them is a woman, Lydia Kuman, wife of a man already sentenced to death for his activities in the Peoples' party. Another is George Khitov, also a leader of the Peoples' party, and the third is a German, Kurt Schneider, who appears to be either doped or suffering from a severe mental depression.

The entire action of the play takes place in the court room before a bench of five high justices, three of whom are fanatical supporters of the "leader." The President of the tribunal, however, is a judge of seventeen years' experience who places justice above expediency, and the fifth member is an aged representative of the old aristocracy of the land who gives lip service only to the new fanaticism.

As the trial progresses, the audience is gradually led to suspect the true state of affairs. The charge is that Lydia Kuman obtained an interview with the "leader" to plead for the life of her husband, that Schneider accompanied her, and that when her plea failed, Schneider fired a revolver at the leader, wounding him in the shoulder. George Khitov is charged with helping to plan the assassination. Before long, however, flaws begin to appear in the State's evidence. Lydia Kuman claims never to have seen Schneider before the tragic morning. Khitov charges that the entire matter is a frame-up intended to create an excuse for suppressing the Peoples' party and engineered by General Rakovski, the Minister of Culture and Enlightenment. The evidence tends more and more to support his charge. Rakovski indignantly denies knowing

Kurt Schneider, but a disgruntled Italian opera soprano tells the court that Rakovski and Schneider were in the habit of meeting at her apartment. No one can actually prove that the "leader" was really wounded at all. There is only the word of his private secretary and his personal physician.

By the time the judges reach their private deliberations, the truth is abundantly clear. The court stands divided three to two for conviction and the death sentence, but the government, in the person of General Rakovski, demands a unanimous verdict because of "the national emergency" and growing attacks on the National party. Even the learned President wavers under the pressure, but the old aristocrat, Count Slatarski, continues to put his honor above the party's claims. The "leader" himself is dramatically summoned to court to display his arm in a sling. But in the meantime, Kuman has escaped from prison and many of the soldiery have gone over to him and to the Peoples' party. Soldiers friendly to him are placed in the court room, and when the "leader" testifies, Kuman suddenly rises up to accuse him and demand his abdication. The "leader" furiously demands the instant death of Kuman, but not a soldier moves. Then one of the judges grasps a pistol to shoot Kuman. Old Count Slatarski struggles with him, gets the pistol, and shoots, not Kuman, but the "leader." Then, with the remaining bullet, the Count kills himself.

In this way, Mr. Rice avoids to the last throwing the odium of assassination on the Peoples' party. But that makes little difference in the total meaning of the play—an impassioned appeal against modern tyranny. Its numerous melodramatic incidents are well worked up, and the audience is kept in ignorance of just enough essential points to sustain suspense right up to the last curtain. Even the Graustark atmosphere of a mythical state does not lessen the effect in view of the many obvious parallels with recent history. The only dramatic objection comes from the excessive "neatness" of the plot. The trouble with so many recent events in Europe is that they represent not so much outright villainy as a combination of hysteria and self-hypnotism. In Mr. Rice's play, the leaders of the National party are deliberate and malicious schemers. It would be better for the play, and perhaps induce an even greater feeling of terror if they were, instead, real zealots—men unable to distinguish between their own emotions and the cause they serve, egotists who have rationalized themselves into fanatics.

The direction of the play is a little awkward in spots, with too much comedy emphasis upon the salutes and pomps of the dictatorship. The really melodramatic scenes, however, are exceedingly well handled. Josephine Victor as Lydia Kuman and Fania Marinoff as the opera singer contribute particularly good performances. The play as a whole is, of course, inflammatory propaganda, written in a mood of burning indignation. (At the Belasco Theatre.)

COMMUNICATIONS

FICTION AND THE CATHOLIC READER

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: I was greatly pleased to read Miss Selwin-Tait's letter in *THE COMMONWEAL* for September 7, calling for "a magazine of our own devoted solely to the type of fiction which would appeal to Catholics as well as non-Catholics, because of its sterling quality."

For the past year or so, I have been talking of such a magazine in many different quarters, and everyone has agreed that a Catholic fiction magazine would fill a great gap in Catholic letters; would provide a necessary and useful market for Catholic writers, and would have a sizable and growing field of readers. The only objection worthy of note is the question, "Where will you get the writers?" There is, without doubt, a leakage of Catholic writers to the popular magazine market, which is excusable in view of the limited and almost penurious Catholic market. If they have the market, they will write for it, and write as Catholics, which is, at least, a difficult thing to do in the popular market.

If we would have Catholic novelists, we must have Catholic short story writers—not that mastery of one form predicates mastery of another, but a school of short story writers is bound to produce some novelists, even *one* novelist. The problem is one of spreading Catholic literacy—of making Catholics read and write as Catholics—and that entails providing the opportunity for them to do so; an opportunity much larger and more expansive than present periodicals permit.

I have developed a plan for publishing a Catholic quarterly dedicated entirely to the short story. From my own experience in the magazine business, and from numerous criticisms of the plan which I have invited, it seems to be feasible and promising. But I have not, alas, the wherewithal to put the plan into motion.

Does anyone know a Catholic who is sufficiently interested in Catholic fiction, and far-sighted enough to see the possibilities of the idea? If there be such a one, he or she would surely be interested in examining the plan I have. It would be, of course, a lay undertaking.

NORMAN McKENNA.

Ft. Hamilton, N. Y.

TO the Editor: I heartily agree with Monica Selwin-Tait about the need for a good magazine of clean, wholesome entertaining literature which would appeal both to Catholic and non-Catholic.

I notice that the *American Home*, published by Doubleday, Doran and Company of Garden City, has the cream of the women's favor. It is very well gotten up and fills a want in so many lives. Many of those who purchase it at the news-stands do so because it is available at all times and as convenient as the newspapers. Now if there were a magazine which catered to both men and women—I mean adventure and detective stories

for men and stories combining travel, legend and heart-interest for women—with views of lovely homes and gardens abroad and in our own land and the newest hints for care of same, I feel sure that it would have a popular appeal. Men and women today are interested in gardens whether they possess one or not and lovely Old World gardens and the history of them would make very interesting reading, especially the gardens and cells of the Carthusian monks and those of the Benedictines. The gardens of France and Italy are in a class by themselves and they would provide excellent food for study and emulation. Then good fiction would add to the popularity of a monthly magazine of that sort.

At the 1933 Flower Show held in the Grand Central Palace in New York, "the cell of a Carthusian monk" easily held first place in the affections of thousands. It was difficult at all times to get a good glimpse of it as the crowds around it were so numerous. There is a field for Catholic Action in bringing the life of the men in these holy orders to the attention of a blasé world. It would prove a most refreshing change and create a desire on the part of many in the United States to know first hand the land and history of these ancient and still new fraternities of men in Christ, Our Saviour.

It would have to be priced at a popular figure, for if it were too expensive, one would forego it one month, and thereby break the thread, and it is the continuous buying public that a magazine really needs and depends on.

Suppose we have a consensus of opinion on this subject. I thank Monica Selwin-Tait for bringing this matter forward in such a constructive manner.

EDWARD BAILEY.

FATHER BEDE JARRETT

Woodchester, England.

TO the Editor: An account of the life of the late Father Bede Jarrett, O.P., is being prepared by his Dominican brethren. May I ask of your readers who have letters or other relevant documents or information to forward them for inspection and early return to Father John Baptist Reeves, O.P., at the Dominican Priory, Woodchester, Glos., England?

VERY REV. BERNARD DELANEY, O.P., *Provincial*.

A CATHOLIC DAILY

Falmouth, Ky.

TO the Editor: I regret and resent the fact that in your discussions on "A Catholic Daily" you always forget or fail to mention that we already have, and are having, and will have a Catholic daily, the *Catholic Daily Tribune*, a very fine paper indeed. As a former professor of philosophy I can tell you that from every viewpoint I much prefer it to your own publication.

REV. J. M. LELEN.

THE COMMONWEAL requests its subscribers to communicate any change of address two weeks in advance to ensure the receipt of all issues.

BOOKS

The Love-lorn

Seven Gothic Tales, by Isak Dinesen. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. \$2.50.

BOOKS come to the reviewer wrapped in the thick cotton batting of publicity to protect them from the harsh glare of critical scrutiny. The reviewer's reaction, very broadly speaking, may be either one of two: he is impressed by the "packaging" and repeats in his own words its optimistic claims, or he is so disappointed by the smallness of the actual product, divested of its wrappings, that he vents on it a (perhaps) disproportionate rage. It is a situation of this sort that meets the reviewer of "Seven Gothic Tales." The volume is a Book-of-the-Month Club selection—which insures it a place amongst such immortalia as "The Cradle of the Deep" and "Dark Hazard." Dorothy Canfield Fisher beautifies it with an introduction that is apparently a report for the aforementioned institution. Jenny Ballou finds the book "a masterpiece of English prose," finds it "almost impossible not to become ecstatic before the gossamer beauty of the style." Mark van Doren very nearly underwent religious conversion after reading "Seven Gothic Tales"; he is "willing to believe any miracle" of the author. "A book bringing the psychological insight of a Henry James to the material of a northern Boccaccio," declared William Rose Benét. What, after this, is one to say about these pastiches from the hand of Countess Blixen (who Isak Dinesen has been revealed to be)? If one bears in the mind the fanfaronades, the raucous public music, which have attended the appearance of these tales, the only thing to do is to cry "Fraud!"

Dismissing the reviews from mind, one sees the book to be a collection of amusing trifles presented in an outmoded prose (really outmoded—what sound purpose can there be in reviving the wearisome rhythms of Anne Radcliffe, "Monk" Lewis, or Robert Charles Maturin?) and holding the momentary excitement of any *tour de force*. The tales are prolix, but that very wordiness has the charm of a detailed painting of pansies on velvet: certainly no work of art, but impressive as an example of to what uses some people will put their leisure time. They are replete with the devices of the very worst fiction—the heavy dependence on coincidence, unmotivated reversals, the story within the story and very often a story within that story—yet, again, in these things lies much of their attraction; for they are signs of the thoroughness of this imitation of the antique. It is perhaps revealing to note the permutations of the last word; it once referred to an ideal of ancient perfection but here, speaking in the language of the day, it means the period piece, the quaint.

The truths fiction has to convey are not inevitably stated by the method of realism, since realism is a convention and not the sole vehicle of truth, but Isak Dinesen's choice of the "Gothic style" for these stories of love-lorn noblemen and eccentrics of a deep-shadowed nineteenth century does distort what she has to say: indeed, the style, the atmosphere, is her statement, murky and

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So that you will be interested to learn that a number of boxes of beautiful and religious Christmas Cards are to be disposed of for the benefit of the work of the Catholic Medical Mission Board of 8 and 10 West 17th Street, New York City. These cards have been pronounced by many persons the most beautiful they have ever seen, and they are equally religious in their subjects, many of them being reproductions of the great madonnas and one is a facsimile of an illuminated manuscript of the ages of faith. There are twelve of the cards assorted in each box, and an offering of a dollar will secure a box for you. Write for a sample box and you will wish many more and will also resolve to interest your friends in securing and using these very unusual cards. The number to be disposed of is limited and you cannot secure these cards elsewhere. Send your communications to:

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exaggerated. If her characters, as Mrs. Canfield says, have a life of their own, not the life of every-day existence, it is merely because the reader knows that at one time writers and their public believed such people moved and breathed. The portentous air that hangs over the stories is, of course, the sign of all romantic writing, which is more intent on preserving than solving mystery; the philosophical talk of the characters consequently displays a determined evasion of the real issues, and the structure of each story is like one of those artificial ruins Cobbett objected to on his rural rides. But all this does not keep the book from being a pleasant literary curio, in fact, makes it that.

GEOFFREY STONE.

A Mature Melodist

The Collected Verse of Robert Hillyer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.00.

UNTIL he was awarded the Pulitzer prize for poetry, Robert Hillyer was one of those poets whose distinction it is to inhabit a decent obscurity. His maturity as a writer has been approached slowly. His early verses were competent, influenced variously, of no great consequence. They proved Hillyer's talent for the scale of lyricism, his understanding of metrics, and his familiarity with the ideology of the nineteen-hundreds. His early models were not the strongest among his contemporaries; his early writing, for the most part, succeeded admirably in being technically competent, fashionable and slight. The triviality of some of it is obvious in the "Collected Verse."

There is singularly little of either profundity or mechanical inventiveness to be found in such things as "XXth Century":

"There is no time,
No time,
There is no time,
Not even for a kiss,
Not even for this,
Not even for this rhyme."

But there are also pieces which, if they are not composed to any very significant scale, are in themselves sufficiently articulate of their possibilities to set them apart among lesser, finished things. Of these is the eighth of thirty pastorals:

"Now on the idle pond
Slowly the fallen leaf
Drifts with its double.

"Crescent from prow to poop,
Curving with curves of gold,
Galley of silence.

"How have our pomps decayed!
Frail is the royal barge,
Autumn the cargo."

and the less restrained and concise "Scherzo," which contains what seems Mr. Hillyer's full realization of his flagging, inconstant, genuine talent as a musician of vowels and consonants—four lines of a fine music:

"The flower-girl, singing comes up from the river
Up through the field to the street of the village,
Bringing her basket heaped high with the pillage
Of riverside violet, lily, and rush."

In such poems, passages, fragments, lines, phrases, Mr. Hillyer's early writing comes fully to flower. They prove a respectable talent and a competent use of it, nothing of either splendor or great compass.

But latterly, there has been a change. His long poem, "Manorbier," has fluidity, significance, depth, stature. It was at once Mr. Hillyer's masterpiece and his beginning: it gave him, paradoxically maturity and youth. It is a starting point from which he has still to start. It places him on the fringes of a company less decently obscure.

RAYMOND LARSSON.

A Literary Puzzle

The Quest for Corvo, by A. J. A. Symons. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

FREDERICK ROLFE, who wrote "Hadrian the Seventh" and dubbed himself Baron Corvo, has long been one of the most haunting of the puzzles literary men occasionally are. Something had, of course, been written—by Shane Leslie, Harry Bainbridge and others. Now comes Mr. Symons's book with the complete solution, unraveled before one's eyes in truly Sherlockian fashion and even with genuine literary grace. A bookseller in London started the chase, which then led through colleges, seminaries, memorial residences and dives. Mr. Symons unearthed no end of letters and documents; and though some few are withheld and others of importance have been destroyed, it is safe to declare that the essential materials have been collected and that poor Rolfe has been left naked and alone to face the stares of posterity.

Naked and alone he always was, to be sure. His maladies, moral and psychological, led to desperate unhappiness and squalor. He was the thorn in the side of every friend, the poison in the cup of all his enemies. Yet it would be a brave person, singularly uninfluenced by the New Testament, who would here lift the finger of condemnation. Mr. Symons believes, and correctly no doubt, that if Rolfe had been suffered to enter the priesthood, despite sundry peccadillos as a seminarian, all might have been different. Another Thompson? No. Yet the mystery of the "spoiled priest" is present in both instances.

The biographer knows that he is dealing with a great if exotic writer. Not a page of the book lets one forget that. There are few English prose stylists like unto Corvo. Like Huysmans, he seems to have had neither masters nor disciples. The present is singularly attuned to him, as the nineties oddly enough were not. He will be remembered because he cannot be forgotten.

AMBROSE FARLEY.

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Briefer Mention*New Light on the Most Ancient East, by V. Gordon Childe. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. \$4.00.*

PROFESSOR CHILDE'S book is of extraordinary value to the general reader. It summarizes in clear and intelligent language all that recent inquiry has unearthed of data regarding ancient cultures. Though based to a large extent upon the author's previous treatise on "The Most Ancient East," the volume is self-explanatory and remarkably up-to-date. Here is plenty of easily assimilable information concerning archaic (prehistoric) civilization in Egypt, India, Syria and Mesopotamia. Numerous illustrations help to make the book a practical guide for those who wish either to prepare themselves for museum study or who seek to familiarize themselves with some of the most absorbing results of modern archeological study.

Three Lectures on Evangelicalism and the Oxford Movement, by Yngve Brilioth. New York: The Oxford University Press. \$1.50.

PROFESSOR BRILIOTH, a distinguished Lutheran theologian long befriended by the late Archbishop Söderblom of Sweden, lectured last year in London on the relations between Evangelicalism and the Tractarians. It is a very interesting subject, upon which he is able to throw some light. That Newman in particular had been influenced by this form of Christian thinking is obvious; and in Pusey's case the relationship was, perhaps, still closer. Professor Brilioth often makes pertinent, very helpful observations, as when for example he draws attention to the importance of the "The Lectures on Justification." The little volume is, however, far too indulgent to Protestant special pleading.

Selections from Early Greek Philosophy; edited by Milton C. Nahm. New York: F. S. Crofts and Company. \$1.25.

PROFESSOR NAHM'S little book, which arranges texts and commentaries to afford the clearest possible summary of pre-Socratic Greek philosophy, can be warmly recommended to the student and the general reader. It groups the thinkers according to schools; buttresses the texts with a solid slice of Gomperz; and supplements a lucid general arrangement with excellent short explanatory notes.

CONTRIBUTORS

MCCREADY HUSTON is on the staff of the *Scranton Republican*. MARTHA BANNING THOMAS contributes stories, articles and verse to current periodicals.

JOHANNES MATTERN is a member of the faculty of Johns Hopkins University and author of several standard treatises on phases of political science.

TED OLSON is a Wyoming poet.

MOST REV. EDWIN V. O'HARA, Bishop of Great Falls, Mont., is associate chairman of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

GEOFFREY STONE is a writer of criticism for newspapers and reviews.

RAYMOND LARSSON, poet and critic, is the author of "O City, Cities," "A Sheaf" and "Wherefore: Peace."

AMBROSE FARLEY is a translator and teacher of classical poetry.